

FOR SUNDAY READING.

LIGHT AND SHADE.

There is no vale so low,
It can not see the sun,
And a soft afterglow
Comes when the storm is done.
And Baca hears the laugh of springs,
The silent beat of angel wings.

There is no mountain height
We climb so wearily,
But keeps the heavens in sight,
With visions fair to see;
And in the mountain cloud we fear
Is light and peace, for Christ is here.

There is no path we tread
But leads to richer grace;
The stars are overhead,
And in the desert place
The wanderer finds the golden stairs
God's angels meet him unawares.

There is no cup we drink,
Of mingled myrrh and wine,
But, sweeter than we think,
It makes the life to shine:
Gethsemane itself is fair,
Soon as we find the Christ is there.

There is no heavy cross,
But borne for Him is light;
And what at morn was loss
We count as gain at night;
For he who seeks God's will alone,
Behind the cross beholds the throne.

The throne of love and power—
Which never sets to Him—
Will gild each passing hour;
The flaming seraphim
Have no deep joy he may not know,
For God and Heaven are here below.
—Christian Advocate.

MAN'S CHIEF END.

Our Final Condition Determined by Our Mind's Ideal.

"Show me," cried Fichte, the eminent German philosopher, "what thou truly lovest, show me what thou seekest and strivest for with thy whole heart, and thou hast already shown me thy life. This love is the root and central part of thy being. What thou

lovest is that thou livest." The ideal of life determines life. Slowly but surely we become what we aim to be. The pleasure-seeker, who makes pleasure the goal of his activity, says life is pleasure. The man of ambition, who spends days and nights of sleepless toil in climbing the dizzy heights of success, says life is fame and applause. The man fighting for wealth in the crowded arena of commercial competition says life is money. The consecrated Christian, who lives in and for God, says life is God. In each case the man lives what he loves.

The determining ideal of life is the chief end of life. Man lives for the supreme aim, purpose or design of his life. Hence the wisdom of the fathers of the Westminster assembly in putting in the very forefront of their admirable theological compendium the question: "What is man's chief end?" and the answer: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." The truth of that answer is written large in the teaching of Scripture and in the service of the one perfect life. The Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Man, God manifest in the flesh, is our example in all things. He showed us how to glorify God by making God His chief end. The events of His life were linked into blessed unity by the persistence with which He followed one aim. Doing the will of God is the touchstone that reveals the difference between the surrendered and the selfish life. "My will, not Thine, be done!" turned Paradise into a desert," wrote Pressense; "Thy will, not mine, be done!" restored Paradise, and made the wilderness blossom as a rose." The hardest thing in life for most of us is to make the Master, not ourselves, the chief end of our activity.

The poverty of Christian living in our day finds its source in an imperfect conception of man's chief end. Many lives are fruitless because purposeless. A cannon ball rolling loosely in the cannon's mouth is simply a bit of harmless metal, but with a charge of powder behind, it has the power of a thunderbolt. What powder is to the cannon ball, so purpose is to the life, the propelling, strength-giving influence. The higher the purpose the stronger its force. Only lives energized by purposes of the highest nature have the richness of experience and the rest of satisfaction which make up the crown of living. Every door leading to real greatness—the greatness which is immortal with the immortality of God—is a door outward, out of self-seeking and out of self-pleasing. Life will be great in days to come in proportion as the soul is surrendered to the will of God, the doing of which is man's chief end. That is the solemn purpose which is worth living for and worth dying for. It transfigures service with the light of Heaven, and carries into the heart an abiding peace.—N. Y. Observer.

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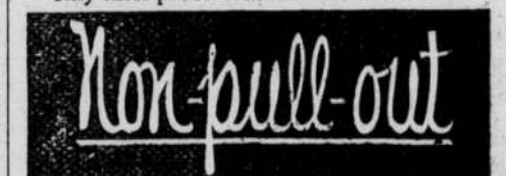
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